Harambee FLAME

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H.A.C.O. HOLDS FIRST KWANZAA CELEBRATION

On the evening of December 21st. the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization, in conjunction with the 1-11 Jaycees, conducted a celebration of Kwanzaa. This observance is an adaptation of traditional harvest celebrations in Afrika and offers U.S.-born Afrikans an alternative to the very commercialized Christmas celebration. Kwanzaa is actually observed between December 26th. and January 1st. However, the scheduling by the other prisoner organizations of Christmas observances made this earlier date necessary.

The H.A.C.O./1-11 Kwanzaa celebration was comprised of a ritual of symbols in which ears of corn, fruit, candles, and other items were displayed to symbolize collective work and responsibility, unity, and other such principles; presentation of gifts/rewards to persons from outside the prison who have been of special help to H.A.C.O. and/or the 1-11 Jaycees; the meal; native Afrikan tribal music, American "soul" music, and other music by artists of Afrikan descent; and dancing.

Gifts/rewards were given to the following persons: Scott Marshall(sponsor for both H.A.C.O. and 1-11), Ed Murphy, Buddy Hogan, Charles Umberger, Ernie Chambers, Fannie Claxton.

Possibly the most uplifting feature of the celebration was the "meal." Due to the fact that both H.A.C.O. and the 1-11 Jaycees are currently at the opposite end of wealthy, individual members and guests from the outside were encouraged to go into their own pockets to purchase snack items for the observance. At the conclusion of the ritual of symbols, the congregation was asked to place food items upon the ritual table. It was beautiful indeed to see those people who had brought food placing their sacks upon the table without any apparent concern about ownership. When it was time to eat, the sacks were opened and the food unselfishly placed upon the trays for everyone's consumption.

FROM LINCOLN WITH LOVE

The following is presented for the enlightenment of those many of you Afrikan folks in the U.S. who worship the memory of Abraham Lincoln because he freed(?) the slaves and labor under the illusion that he did so out of a belief in equality and justice.

"I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold public office, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality. And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race."

-excerpted from the Lincoln-Douglas debates

COMMUNITY RADIO

Several weeks ago the formation of a new organization, S.T.A.Y.(Station Trying Again for You), was announced. It is the stated intent of Jarvis Garnett, Ellen Reddy, William Thompson, and other members of this group to establish a non-profit, community-access radio station for the Afrikan community in Omaha. The Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization wishes the Brothers and Sisters involved in this effort the greatest of success.

In the past few years Afrikan people in Omaha have "suffered" the loss of "soul" radio programming at least three or four times. Qualitatively speaking, however, there have been no losses. There has never been any radio programming in the city of Omaha which was primarily designed to meet the needs of Afrikan people there. Rather, the "soul" programming that there has been did little more than pipe "shake-your-boody," crass, commercial "music" into

(cont. on p. 2)

Black homes for the purpose of getting our hard-earned bucks into the pockets of advertisers.

KOWH did mix some jazz(generally of the commercial type) and religious programming into its format from time to time. But for the most part, its appeal was to Afrikan teenagers through the repetitive airing of "soul" top-forty tunes(In the next issue of the FLAME we will present the lyrics from a couple of popular tunes of this type.). The "soul" programming of other radio stations has generally been limited to this latter format.

There is an important principle connected with any commercial venture, that profit has to be the number-one priority. This, of course, means that the needs of the people "served" by the venture necessarily take a back seat. S.T.A.Y. apparently recognizes this in its efforts to establish a non-profit radio station.

We should not limit ourselves, though, to consideration of the profit factor but should stress the matter of the needs of Omaha's Afrikan population. What are some of these needs which a radio station could meet or address?

1-We need to be exposed to the works of Afrikan(both native and American-born) artists in several fields: music, journalism, drama, creative writing, etc.--particularly those artists who get little or no exposure on commercial stations.
2-We need a forum for the expression of views.
3-We need information about events and developments, in and outside of our community, which are of relevance to the continuing struggle of Afrikan people, and poor people everywhere, to achieve self-determination.

These are but some of our needs. The Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization urges Afrikan people in Omaha to support the efforts of S.T.A.Y. to establish a station designed to meet or address these and other needs.

-the editor

THE NEW YEAR

The following is a list of concerns which the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization intends to address in 1983. We will do this through discussion at our weekly meetings, through cooperative work with other organizations, and through whatever other means which there might be available to us. We encourage you to be of assistance to us in whatever ways you can. Our mailing address is: Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, Ne.; 68502-0500.

-Religion and Afrikan people in the United States. Has Christianity served us well? Are there more effective options, with respect to religion, which we might consider?

-Relationships between Afrikan men and Afrikan women in the U.S. How intensive and extensive are the problems facing U.S.-born Afrikan men and women in our attempts to form and maintain lasting and wholesome relationships? How shall we deal with the issue of Afrikan male shortage? What are the impacts of relationships between Afrikan and white persons upon the overall struggle of Afrikan people in the U.S. to overcome ethnic self-rejection?

-Afrikans in the media. What do and should we expect of Afrikan reporters, commentators, etc. in a generally white-controlled media, both news and entertainment? What can we do to gain access to or control over an adequate portion of these operations?

-Education. What are practical and effective strategies for dealing with the miseducation and indoctrination provided our youth by the public school system? Has busing had any positive impacts? Is decentralization of schools an answer?

The above are but a few of the questions we will want to address in the coming year. If you have others or insights into any of the above, your suggestions are welcome.

ENLIGHTENMENT

"And yet it happens that the beginnings of creation are hard to tell apart from mere destruction. This too should not escape our remembrance: the way is not an old road ready for consumers to travel on; the way is a call to creation. Easy it is to fall into the trap of loneliness if we forget that our people are not just of the present, not just of the walking multitudes of murdered souls and zombies now around us, but many, many more gone and many, many more to come. Because it is useless to locate hope in the already destroyed; it is the method of the lazy hypocritical soul, courting despair so as to spare itself the necessity of action. As reasonable as it would be to visit cemeteries there to wait upon the dead to rise to our conversation. Yes, there are many whose semblance of life is all trapped within the present death. But what are we if their numbers alone should depress us into immobility? What are we if we see nothing beyond the present, hear nothing from the ages of our flowing, and in all our existence can utter no necessary preparation of the future way?"

-Ayi Kwei Armah

"These times call for a return to the nurturing spirit--the spirit of love that has sustained us from slave ship to this hour--together and still a sweet people. Need to stay mindful that we are the flowers in bloom. That we are the generation that our ancestors suffered and died for, the ones our grandmothers lived and kept the faith for. Need to know that the hardest work's been done, and that we can meet the challenges. Our challenge is to persevere and to spark our creative juices and find new ways to solve some old problems. Let's reach out to those in need--at home, next door, cross town. In this spirit--during this season that celebrates love--need to remember that it's our tradition to care for our own, that yes, we are each other's keepers. If not us...then who? If not now ...when?"

-Susan L. Taylor

ACT IN SOLIDARITY WITH BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS

The following entertainers have performed in South Africa. We must not let them perform in our communities.

Shirley Bassey	George Benson
Brook Benton	Ray Charles
Billy Cobham	Andrew Crouch
Lou Donaldson	The Drifters
Aretha Franklin	Nikki Giovanni
Isaac Hayes	Joe Henderson
Millie Jackson	Eartha Kitt
Johnny Mathis	Curtis Mayfield
Mighty Clouds of Joy	Stephanie Mills
Charles Pace	Wilson Pickett
The Platters	Della Reese
Richard Roundtree	Shirley Scott
Percy Sledge	Jimmy Smith
The Staple Singers	The Supremes
The Temptations	Rufus Thomas
Tina Turner	Stanley Turrentine
Jimmy Witherspoon	

The above is taken from the monthly magazine, SOUTHERN AFRICA. All of the names have not been listed here, only those of U.S. entertainers of Afrikan ancestry. Several organizations, both in South Afrika(Azania) and in the U.S., have been trying for years to persuade entertainers and athletes in the U.S. and in other countries not to put their stamps of approval upon apartheid by performing in South Afrika. Among the organizations are: the Patrice Lumumba Coalition, Black United Front, Azanian People's Organization, Congress of South African Students, and others.

Afrikan people in the U.S. are being asked to boycott the performances of U.S. entertainers such as those listed above.

Everything you need for inner peace is inside yourself.

FROM OTHER SOURCES

U.S. "Democracy" at Work, the Eddie Carthan Story--On November 4th. of this past year, a jury found Eddie Carthan, the former mayor of Tchula, Mississippi, not guilty of having arranged the killing of Roosevelt Granderson, a U.S.-born Afrikan alderman who had opposed the Carthan administration.

The following is a recounting of some of the events which preceded this murder trial.

"After taking office, using federal funds, Carthan's administration began a program to repair, remodel and weatherize old housing, built 100 new housing units, started a nutrition program for the elderly and handicapped, opened both a day care center and a health clinic--and created 80 new jobs. Things like this had never been done in Tchula before. But despite these accomplishments--or because of them--powerful forces lined up against the Carthan administration.

"The Mississippi state legislature passed a law aimed specifically at Tchula. It allowed a majority of members of the Board of Aldermen to exercise control over fiscal and personnel matters that are properly the mayor's responsibility. As of yet this law has only been applied in Tchula.

"The town's government became crippled as the aldermen opposed Carthan's every action, even going so far as locking City Hall shut, cutting the mayor's salary from $600 to $60 a month, and increasing property taxes for people who openly supported the mayor.

"Blacks working for the town were forced to resign and were replaced by whites--including an arch-racist as elections commissioner. Federal funds also dried up as political pressures from Mississippi made themselves felt in Jimmy Carter's administration, even though Carter owed his election to Black voters.

"The campaign against the Carthan administration culminated when the mayor, an alderman and five auxiliary policemen(the 'Tchula 7') were convicted of assault for having disarmed an illegally-appointed, non-bonded white police officer who had taken over the police headquarters and was changing the locks on City Hall.

"Someshow the law in Mississippi saw the duly elected mayor, and not the illegally appointed police chief, as the threat to the public. Carthan was given 3 years and the others received suspended sentences.

"The many legal irregularities in the murder trial, the assault case, and Carthan's equally suspect October 1981 conviction for defrauding the federal government(in which a key piece of evidence is a document on which everyone agrees Carthan's signature was forged--although supposedly with his 'permission'), have received some national press....."

--CHANGES(Dec. '82/Jan. '83)

Leon Sullivan/Making White Racism Look Good--"...This year's report(by Leon Sullivan on U.S. corporate activity in South Africa), issued November 1, argues that U. S. corporations in South Africa act as a force for progressive change...

"The way the Sullivan report presents them, Black wage gains do sound impressive. According to data supplied by Sullivan's researchers, Black wages increased an average of 214 percent between 1979 and 1982, while white workers' pay rose by only 175 percent. And between 1970 and 1980 Black wages increased an average of 400 percent, while white workers' pay increased 250 percent.

"But measured almost any other way, the comparison does not look so favorable. Indeed, the South African reports reveal that between 1970 and 1980, the gap in actual wages between Black and white workers more than doubled--from $321 in 1970 to $698 in 1980. By 1982, the average monthly wage for whites stood at $1044, while Black wages averaged only $271, leaving a $773 gap between average Black and white wages..."

--SOUTHERN AFRICA(Dec. '82)

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